

# Beis Soroh Schneirer

Independent school inspection report

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
| DCSF registration number | 302/6104        |
| Unique reference number  | 131026          |
| Inspection number        | 345366          |
| Inspection dates         | 14 January 2010 |
| Reporting inspector      | Jill Bainton    |

For use on light touch inspections from September 2009

Age group: 3-11

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002<sup>1</sup>, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005<sup>2</sup>, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was a light touch inspection which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

## Information about the school

Beis Soroh Schneirer was established in Hendon in 1996 as an independent Jewish school for girls aged from three to 11 years. It serves families from the strictly orthodox Jewish community of north-west London in response to their specific religious and educational needs. In 2005, business premises were successfully converted to a school and there are now 237 girls on roll, 50 of whom are in the Nursery and receive government nursery funding. One girl has a statement of special educational need. The school is guided by the principles of the Torah and is rooted in an ethos of Torah values. The school aims to instil in its girls a love of their Jewish heritage and traditions and to ensure that they grow up to be confident, upright members of society. The school was first inspected in May 2007, when all the regulations were met.

## Evaluation of the school

Beis Soroh Schneirer has maintained its high standards since the last inspection and continues to meet all the regulations for registration. The quality of education is good and the school has made improvements to both the *Chol* (secular subjects) and *Kodesh* (Jewish studies) curricula, so that the teaching is now consistently good, as is the progress the girls make. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the girls is outstanding and arrangements for the safeguarding and care of girls are good. Good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that girls make a good start to their education. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The strong Jewish ethos permeates the whole school day and the values that are taught are reinforced continually. Parents are very positive in their support of the school, making comments such as 'a wonderful, caring family environment' and 'my child is carefully nurtured and has made good progress'.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The quality of education is good, as is the curriculum, through which the introduction of new reading, writing and mathematics initiatives has been implemented successfully since the last inspection. Both the *Kodesh* and *Chol* elements of the curriculum are now good and meet the needs of the girls, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The *Kodesh* curriculum has its own unique *mesoirah* (tradition). This spiritual ethos permeates the whole school. Pupils achieve well in Torah *Nach* (Hebrew reading and writing). Older pupils come to grips with *Rashi* (Jewish commentary). *Middos* (Torah values) circle time is outstanding and enables the pupils to leave the school with high standards of integrity. The girls are taught to speak Yiddish as part of the curriculum. The school supports the less able pupils effectively, including those with a statement of special educational need, ensuring their good progress.

The *Chol* curriculum is now broader and is constantly updated and revised. Mathematics is well resourced and English is taught using a new scheme, which is proving very effective and popular with the girls. These subjects, together with science, have appropriate time allocations. Provision for information and communication technology has been extended. Art, design and technology, music, history and geography have been given more emphasis. Due to pressure on time there are only limited opportunities for physical education, with one lesson per week for each class. The senior management team has appointed separate heads for the key stages and this has proved beneficial in developing and strengthening both curricula.

The curriculum is further enriched through visits, shows and projects, which the girls say they have enjoyed. The older girls went recently to see the State Opening of Parliament parade.

Teaching and assessment are good, with some teaching occasionally outstanding, which is an improvement. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good. The relationships at all levels are very positive as staff know the girls and their capabilities very well indeed. This information is used very effectively in targeted questioning and in allotting appropriate challenging tasks for the girls. The girls confirm that they enjoy school and their lessons. The school has worked hard to raise standards in teaching and staff have attended a large number of training activities. The teaching is now more focused with better planning and assessment in place and the pace of lessons is good. Staff plan their lessons well and share the objectives very clearly with the class. The girls respond by working hard, concentrating on their given tasks and showing their evident enjoyment in the lesson. In the outstanding lessons, teachers have thought very carefully about the learning needs of all their pupils. The approach is dynamic and varied. This results in many pupils making very good progress in developing their conceptual understanding of the subject. For example, in a history lesson on Victorian life the

girls learnt how different life was for the rich and poor children and then wrote short, poignant accounts. The older girls are now divided into groups for mathematics, Hebrew text and reading. The school has monitored this carefully and standards in these subjects have improved. Parents receive regular reports on the progress their daughter is making. Although informative, these reports do not provide sufficient information about what has been learnt and what each girl needs to do next to improve.

Assessment is regular and is used well to support teaching. The school has introduced new assessment procedures, which give more detailed information which staff use to plan future teaching. These new systems for tracking pupils' progress enable senior leaders to identify underperformance early and to organise appropriate interventions. Evidence from first-hand observation and scrutiny of attainment data shows that the vast majority of pupils are making consistently good progress. The results of national tests are good, and overall girls gain levels appropriate for their age.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the girls is outstanding, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school have successfully extended the provision for cultural development. Beis Soroh Schneirer is a caring, family school where all the girls are highly valued as individuals and are carefully nurtured. The girls' parents are right to be proud of them, their behaviour is outstanding, and they are polite and respectful to each other and the adults at the school. All the girls, including those who need additional help, are treated equally and highly valued. Staff set excellent role models. The spiritual guidance taught through the *Kodesh* curriculum is made relevant to the girls' everyday lives. Older pupils assist and support younger ones and all have a good sense of right and wrong. Pupils' attendance is very good; they enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their knowledge of themselves and their self-esteem and confidence are developed effectively. Pupils enjoy and participate enthusiastically in the full range of school activities, including the shows. They help to initiate and take part in a range of charity and fund-raising activities. Pupils' basic skills, including their personal skills, together with their awareness of public services and institutions, prepare them well for their future working lives. The school has worked hard to increase cultural awareness amongst the girls since the last inspection. For example, workshops are held where the girls recreate life in other countries, dressing up as Inuits or Arab tribesmen. This gives them an increased cultural awareness and promotes racial harmony and cohesion. The school is at the heart of the Jewish community and takes an active role in community activities.

## Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

Provision for safeguarding the welfare, health and safety of all the girls, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is good. The very friendly and caring

ethos in the school ensures that all the girls feel valued and safe. They report that there is no bullying and that staff care for them well. Procedures for safeguarding the girls are good. The school has an appropriate policy and staff have received training in line with current guidance. Thorough checks are completed prior to the appointment of all staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. This information is held on a single central register. The school's arrangements for ensuring that the health and safety of the girls meet the regulations are effective and are fully implemented. There are robust plans for ensuring fire safety; fire drills are held regularly and recorded carefully, fire-fighting equipment is checked annually and a comprehensive fire risk assessment is in place. The school has a three-year plan for increasing accessibility, which meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002. The girls demonstrate an understanding of a healthy lifestyle and are encouraged to eat healthily and to take regular exercise.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The school is effective in meeting the girls' needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress in their learning, are very well cared for and are happy and settled. Strong links with parents and carers help to involve them in their daughters' education and parents report that they feel their daughters are well supported by the kind and caring staff and they are kept well informed about their progress. The leadership and management are good, with an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, resulting in effective steps to improve. Provision in the Reception class has improved since the last inspection and is now good with outstanding features, such as the lively way that girls are introduced to the letters of the alphabet. Most girls make good progress towards the early learning goals. The girls play well alone and with others. There is a good balance of activities led by teachers and those initiated by the girls themselves. They have many opportunities to choose their activity and the resources are good. Their behaviour is outstanding and they respond well to staff praise and encouragement. Activities are generally planned well and are based on a sound understanding of the way young children learn. Staff make careful observations on the girls' progress and match the planned activities to the range of their needs. Assessment is frequent and detailed in the Reception class but less well developed in the Nursery class, as joint planning and assessment are limited.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

## What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- include more detail in the reports about what the girls have learnt and what they need to do next to improve
- extend joint planning and assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

# Inspection judgement recording form

| outstanding | good | satisfactory | inadequate |
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|

## The quality of education

|  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Overall quality of education   |  | √ |  |  |
| How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils |  | √ |  |  |
| How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs         |  | √ |  |  |
| How well pupils make progress in their learning  |  | √ |  |  |

## Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

|  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | √ |  |  |  |
| The behaviour of pupils  | √ |  |  |  |

## Welfare, health and safety of pupils

|  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils |  | √ |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|

## The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

|   |  |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| How good are the outcomes for children in the EYFS?                                     |  | √ |  |  |
| What is the quality of provision in the EYFS?   |  | √ |  |  |
| How effectively is the EYFS led and managed?  |  | √ |  |  |
| Overall effectiveness: how well does the school meet the needs of children in the EYFS? |  | √ |  |  |

## The quality of boarding provision *(leave blank if not applicable)*

|                                  |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Evaluation of boarding provision |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|



## School details

|   |   |            |            |
|---|---|------------|------------|
| Name of school  | Beis Soroh Schneirer  |            |            |
| DCSF number   | 302/6104  |            |            |
| Unique reference number                                       | 131026  |            |            |
| Type of school  | Jewish day school   |            |            |
| Status  | Independent   |            |            |
| Date school opened  | 1996  |            |            |
| Age range of pupils   | 3-11  |            |            |
| Gender of pupils  | Female  |            |            |
| Number on roll (full time pupils)                             | Boys: 0   | Girls: 237 | Total: 237 |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need | Boys: 0   | Girls: 1   | Total: 1   |
| Annual fees (day pupils)                                      | £3,300  |            |            |
| Address of school   | Arbiter House<br>Wilberforce Road<br>West Hendon<br>London<br>NW9 6AX |            |            |
| Telephone number  | 020 8201 7771   |            |            |
| Fax number  | 020 8201 7773   |            |            |
| Email address   | bssschool@btconnect.com   |            |            |
| Headteachers  | Mrs R Weiss/Mrs S Mossberg  |            |            |
| Proprietor  | Rabbi A Adler   |            |            |
| Reporting inspector   | Jill Bainton  |            |            |
| Date of inspection  | 14 January 2010   |            |            |